

RETAIL PRICES - DECEMBER QUARTER, 1946.

All Items - "C" Series.

Index numbers for retail prices of all items ("C" Series) for December quarter, 1946 (with base 1000 in 1923-1927 in the six State Capitals) were:- Brisbane 1110, Toowoomba 1125, Rockhampton 1111, Townsville 1156, Bundaberg 1090, and Warwick 1108.

The figures show the following percentage increases when compared with those for the periods shown.

Retail Price Index, "C" Series, Percentage Increase in December Quarter, 1946.

City.		From Year Ended June, 1939.	From December Quarter, 1945.	From September Quarter, 1946.
		%	%	%
Brisbane ..	..	28.6	3.4	1.6
Toowoomba ..	..	32.2	3.4	1.7
Rockhampton ..	..	29.0	2.9	1.6
Townsville ..	..	26.8	3.8	1.9
Bundaberg ..	..	29.6	3.2	1.6
Warwick ..	...	34.8	3.5	2.1

Food and groceries, clothing and footwear, and the miscellaneous group of items comprising household drapery and hardware, fuel, light, fares, etc., have shown the following percentage changes during the last quarter and since 1938-39.

Retail Prices, Percentage Increase in December Quarter, 1946.

City.	Food and Groceries.		Clothing and Footwear.		Miscellaneous Items.	
	From Year Ended June, 1939.	From Sept. Quarter, 1946.	From Year Ended June, 1939.	From Sept. Quarter, 1946.	From Year Ended June, 1939.	From Sept. Quarter, 1946.
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Brisbane ..	16.4	2.8	87.2	2.5	20.0	0.4
Toowoomba ..	27.0	2.4	84.3	2.7	19.4	0.6
Rockhampton ..	15.2	2.4	84.5	2.2	21.4	0.4
Townsville ..	14.2	2.6	85.4	2.6	19.6	0.8
Bundaberg ..	16.8	2.4	83.4	2.3	17.1	0.3
Warwick ..	21.9	2.9	86.4	3.3	22.1	0.6

Food and Rent (4 and 5 roomed houses) - "B" Series.

Index numbers for food and rent only ("B" Series) for December Quarter 1946 (with base 1000 in 1923-1927 for the six State Capitals) were:- Brisbane 942, Toowoomba 965, Rockhampton 930, Townsville 1001, Bundaberg 907, and Warwick 917.

From September Quarter 1946 to December Quarter 1946, the "B" Series Index showed increases in Brisbane, 1.8%, Toowoomba, 1.6%, Rockhampton, 1.9%, Townsville, 1.7%, Bundaberg, 1.7%, and Warwick, 2.0%.

The increases were caused chiefly by a rise in the price of meat.

The rent index increased 0.9% in Rockhampton, and remained stationary in all other towns.

Compared with December Quarter, 1945, the "B" Series index increased in Brisbane, 2.2%, Toowoomba, 2.0%, Rockhampton, 2.1%, Townsville, 2.6%, Bundaberg, 3.1%, and Warwick, 2.7%.

The rent index showed no movement in Brisbane or Toowoomba, but increases were recorded in Rockhampton, 1.3%, Townsville, 0.1%, Bundaberg, 1.2%, and Warwick, 0.5%.

Comparison of Costs in Queensland Cities.

The following table shows the amounts, for the various Queensland cities, required in December quarter, 1946, to purchase the quantity of goods or housing which would have cost £1 in Brisbane.

Amounts Required in Various Cities to Purchase Equivalent of £1 in Brisbane.

City.	All Items.			Food and Groceries.			Rent (4 and 5 Rooms).			Clothing and Footwear.		
	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Brisbane ..	1.	0.	0.	1.	0.	0.	1.	0.	0.	1.	0.	0.
Toowoomba ..	1.	0.	3.	1.	0.	9.	1.	0.	0.		19.	8.
Rockhampton ..	1.	0.	0.	1.	0.	8.		18.	1.	1.	0.	1.
Townsville ..	1.	0.	10.	1.	1.	11.	1.	0.	1.	1.	0.	1.
Bundaberg ..		19.	8.	1.	1.	2.		15.	10.		19.	10.
Warwick ..	1.	0.	0.	1.	0.	8.		17.	3.		19.	10.

Basic Wage Rates in State Capital Cities.

The following table shows the Retail Price Index Number ("C" Series) for each of the six Capital Cities for the December Quarter of 1946 and the prevailing basic wage rates for males prescribed by Commonwealth and State industrial tribunals respectively. The fourth column shows the amounts which would be required in Brisbane to provide a standard of living equivalent to that provided by each State Basic Wage in its own Capital City. The differences between these amounts and the State Basic Wage for Brisbane, which are given in the last column, show the margin of advantage in real purchasing power provided by the Queensland Basic Wage over each of the other State Basic Wages.

Retail Prices and Basic Wage Rates - December Quarter, 1946.

Capital City.	Retail Price Index ("C" Series) December, 1946.	Commonwealth Court Basic Wage for Males.	State Court Basic Wage for Males.	Equivalent at Brisbane Prices, of each State Basic Wage.	Margin of Purchasing Power in Favour of Brisbane State Basic Wage.
	Index.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	£. s. d.	s. d.
Brisbane ..	1110	5. 3. 0.	5. 7. 0.	5. 7. 0.	- -
Sydney ..	1177	5. 8. 0.	5. 8. 0.	5. 1. 10.	5. 2.
Melbourne ..	1157	5. 7. 0.	5. 7. 0.	5. 2. 8.	4. 4.
Adelaide ..	1128	5. 2. 0.	5. 2. 0.	5. 0. 4.	6. 8.
Perth ..	1136	5. 3. 0.	5. 2. 1.	4. 19. 9.	7. 3.
Hobart ..	1155	5. 4. 0.	5. 4. 0.	4. 19. 11.	7. 1.

In December, 1946, the Commonwealth Arbitration Court awarded an interim basic wage increase. The new interim basic wage is determined on the same principles as were used for the existing basic wage, except that, in determining the "needs" portion of the wage, a new "Court" Index Number (Court Index-Second Series) is to be used. This index number is derived by multiplying the "C" Series Index Number by .087, instead of .081, as heretofore. The effect is to equate the "needs" wage to the equivalent of 86s.0d. instead of 81s.0d., in the Six Capital Cities during the period 1923 to 1927. To the "needs" wage is still to be added the existing "prosperity" loading, 6s.0d. in New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland, and 4s.0d. in the other States. The application of these principles gave an increase in the Commonwealth Basic Wage of 7s.0d. in all Capital Cities, except Hobart, where it was 6s.0d.

The State Basic Wages were increased by 7s.0d. in Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne, and 6s.0d. in Hobart, following the Commonwealth Basic Wage rise, while Adelaide received a rise of 3s.6d. There was no change in Perth.

The rise in the "C" Series Index Number during the quarter ended December, 1946, caused a "cost of living" addition of 2s.0d. to the Commonwealth Basic Wage in Brisbane and an addition of 1s.0d. in Melbourne, Perth, and Hobart. The State Basic Wage in Brisbane received an increase of 2s.0d., while Melbourne and Hobart State Basic Wages (which adopt Commonwealth rates) received an increase of 1s.0d. In Perth there was no change.

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14th February, 1947.

RETAIL PRICES INDEX.

Table No. 1.

THE "ALL ITEMS" INDEX - "C" SERIES.
(Base = 1000 in 1923-1927 in Six State Capitals.)

CITY.	Year	Year	Year	QUARTERS ENDED -				
	Ended Decr, 1928.	Ended June, 1939.	Ended Decr., 1946.	December, 1945.	March, 1946.	June, 1946.	September, 1946.	December, 1946.
Brisbane ..	917	863	1094	1074	1081	1090	1092	1110
Toowoomba ..	906	851	1107	1088	1095	1101	1106	1125
Rockhampton	903	861	1096	1080	1086	1092	1093	1111
Townsville	1023	912	1136	1114	1123	1129	1135	1156
Bundaberg ..	(b)	841	1074	1056	1061	1070	1073	1090
Weighted Average Five Cities (a)	915	864	1097	1077	1084	1093	1095	1114
Warwick ..	914	822	1087	1071	1075	1080	1085	1108

(a) Prior to 1937 the five towns in the weighted averages included Charters Towers and Warwick which have now been replaced by Townsville and Bundaberg.

(b) Prices for Bundaberg were not collected prior to September quarter, 1936.

Table No. 2.

FOOD, GROCERIES AND RENT (4 AND 5 ROOMED HOUSES) INDEX - "B" SERIES.
(Base = 1000 in 1923-1927 in Six State Capitals.)

CITY.	Year	Year	Year	QUARTERS ENDED -				
	Ended Decr., 1928.	Ended June, 1939.	Ended Decr., 1946.	December, 1945.	March, 1946.	June, 1946.	September, 1946.	December, 1946.
Brisbane ..	901	852	932	922	929	933	925	942
Toowoomba ..	833	821	955	946	954	952	950	965
Rockhampton	858	837	919	911	916	916	913	930
Townsville..	1047	916	989	976	986	983	984	1001
Bundaberg ..	(b)	799	897	880	892	896	892	907
Weighted Average Five Cities (a)	892	851	936	925	933	935	929	945
Warwick ..	841	768	904	893	900	900	899	917

(a) Prior to 1937 the five towns in the weighted averages included Charters Towers and Warwick which have now been replaced by Townsville and Bundaberg.

(b) Prices for Bundaberg were not collected prior to September quarter, 1936.

Table No. 3.

AVERAGE RETAIL PRICES - FOOD AND GROCERIES.
Brisbane.

Commodity and Unit of Quantity.		Year	MONTH OF -		Commodity and Unit of Quantity.		Year	MONTH OF -	
		Ended June, 1939.	Sept., 1946.	Decr., 1946.			Ended June, 1939.	Sept., 1946.	Decr., 1946.
		d.	d.	d.			d.	d.	d.
Bread ..	2 lb.	5.33	5.50	5.50	Cats - flaked	1 lb.	3.57	4.14	4.13
Flour ..	2 lb.	3.73	4.09	4.09	Milk ..	1 qt.	6.00	7.10	7.10
Tea ..	1 lb.	26.99	27.05	27.05	Beef - Sirloin				
Sugar ..	1 lb.	3.98	3.93	3.93	Roast ..	1 lb.	8.73	12.05	14.00
Jam (Plum)	1½ lb.	8.02	12.43	12.18	Beef - Steak				
Raisins	1 lb.	10.57	12.91	12.91	Rump ..	1 lb.	11.34	17.05	18.00
Potatoes	7 lb.	14.83	8.36	8.37	Beef - Steak				
Onions ..	1 lb.	2.93	2.98	3.25	Chuck ..	1 lb.	5.83	7.50	9.00
Soap ..	1 lb.	6.20	6.97	6.94	Beef - Rolled				
Butter ..	1 lb.	19.00	19.82	19.82	Brisket ..	1 lb.	5.48	7.55	9.00
Cheese ..	1 lb.	13.28	15.14	15.14	Mutton - Leg	1 lb.	7.75	8.55	10.00
Eggs ..	1 doz.	19.69	22.00	22.00	Mutton - Chops				
					Loin ..	1 lb.	7.78	9.00	10.00